

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

“Balinese Dreams” by Jose R. Chavez



インドネシアのバリ島。人気の観光地の一つですね。今回は盛岡校 Jose先生がバリ島を訪れた際のエッセイです。

The Indonesian archipelago consists of over 10,000 islands. With so many islands, some uninhabited and some densely populated, there are hundreds of various and distinct beliefs and traditions. But one thing all these islands share in common is beautiful beaches and warm weather.

I chose to travel to Bali during the Indonesian dry season which runs from April to September, picking a mid to late September departure date. My wanting to travel to Indonesia was a culmination of years of watching perfect barreling Indonesian waves in surf movies, and having lived through the sub-zero winter of Morioka with another one quickly approaching. After months of waiting the day finally arrived. I left for Narita airport on the Shinkansen, spending one night in Tokyo before catching my flight. Once again I was flying Singapore airlines. My experience with this airline has always been great. Their airplanes are very comfortable, roomy, and equipped with an outstanding entertainment system. So off I flew south of the equator for the first time.

Arriving in Ngurah Rai International Airport, after a short stopover in Singapore, I proceeded to the visa counter. The line was very long. Despite the fact that it was almost ten at night many other flights had arrived around the same time. The majority of people were tourist that needed to get their visas as well; so the waiting began. While in line, men that seem to be airport officials will tell you that they can give you express service getting your visa and going through customs for a fee of twenty dollars. I didn't know if this was real or a scam, so I opted to stay in line like most other people were doing. After paying for my twenty-five dollar visa, going through customs, and getting my luggage, I was happily and finally in Bali, Indonesia.

The first thing that struck me about Bali was how many people there were. Saying it's crowded is an understatement. The tour company I had booked my accommodations through sent a driver to pick me up at the airport who spoke impeccable Japanese but almost no English. On the road however, he was brilliant, knowing how to seamlessly weave in and out the congestion of moped traffic. I arrived at the first of my two accommodations close to midnight and decided to settle in for the night.

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The first hotel I stayed at was a decent one. It was very close to the beach and included a pool with a swim up bar which I never got to take advantage of because I was always at the beach. It also had a restaurant that served our daily complimentary breakfast that was pretty mediocre but it was included in the tour package so I had no complaints. The hotel being in Kuta more than made up for the breakfast.

The area of Kuta was born and bred on surfing. Almost every other store is a surf shop or in some way connected with surfing or the surfing culture. Every morning I would weave my way through the maze of narrow streets, rent a surfboard and head to the world famous Kuta beach. Kuta beach is a long strip of white sand beach with almost no shade to be found. However, it is easy enough to rent a beach umbrella and a beach lounging chair from the dozens and dozens of beach umbrella and beach lounging chair vendors. But beach lounging was not the reason I had traveled to Indonesia. Surfing was my goal and surf I did.

archipelago 群島、諸島 **uninhabited** 人の住んでいない、無人の
densely 密集して **distinct** まったく異なった **culmination** 結果
equator 赤道 **scam** 詐欺 **opt** 選ぶ **congestion** 混雑
moped 原動機つき自転車 **mediocre** 良くも悪くもない
roll in 殺到する、たくさん来る **mushy** 柔らかな
forgiving 寛大な **recede** 遠ざかる

No significantly large swells had been forecasted during my stay in Bali; but there were plenty of waist to head high waves every day. The waves roll in constantly, so even though it was crowded with surfers there were enough waves for everyone. The surf at Kuta is a beach break and described as a mushy wave. It is gentle and forgiving so surfers of all skill levels can enjoy it. Reef breaks are a lot faster and steeper and only recommended for higher level surfers but are a highlight of any surf adventure. Bali has many reef breaks that I happily surfed as well.

After a few days at Kuta I headed to my second accommodation which was receded a good distance back from the beach. It was in an area named Legian. I still surfed every morning and evening while in Legian but this time I had to take a taxi to my choice of either Kuta or Legian beach. Legian beach is wider and longer than Kuta and the waves are not as uniformed so it takes a bit of surfing experience to catch good waves. The higher skills needed to surf Legian keeps the crowd to a minimum and I found myself having many waves all to myself. Surfing in Indonesia was a realization of a long waited dream. I am making plans to go back and realize it again!

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